

Saving water saves energy



Introduction

In Ireland we are always talking about the wet weather but do we realise how precious a resource water really is? Everywhere on the planet water is vital to grow food, for human health and for wildlife. It is essential to our everyday lives. But as the climate changes and both drought and flooding increase, the amount of clean water we have access to decreases. It takes a lot of energy to clean and pump that water to our taps, so we need to look at ways of saving both water and energy.

Why not use your One Good Idea campaign to encourage people to make simple changes to save water and energy?

Facts & Tips

Did you know?

- *It has been estimated that on average a person in the developing world uses 10 litres of water a day, while a person in Dublin uses 150 litres of water per day.*
- *Only 2.5% of the earth's water is fresh water and, of that, less than 1% is accessible for use by humans.*

How does saving water save energy?

We rely on a clean supply of water at home for drinking, cleaning, cooking, showers, baths and washing clothes. Water is also used in schools, offices and many industries and businesses including recreation and tourism. But what does that have to do with saving energy? It takes energy to run the treatment plants and the pumping stations that clean and carry the water that comes out of our taps. It takes energy to heat the hot water we use every day in our homes, schools, businesses and hospitals.

What can we do?

There are two main things we can do to save water and save energy at home, in school and at work.

- If we reduce the amount of water we use we reduce the amount of energy used to treat and pump water to where we use it.
- If we use less hot water we can reduce the amount of energy we use to heat it.

Top tips for reducing your water use at home and in school

- Don't leave the tap running when you are brushing your teeth. Turning off the tap can save over 7,000 litres of water per year!
- Use a bucket and sponge instead of a hose if washing the car, it uses a lot less water.



- A third of all the water used in the house is flushed down the toilet. Some larger toilet cisterns can work effectively with a smaller flush. Save water by putting a bottle filled with water or a displacement device to reduce the amount of water in the cistern.
- Be sure to fix leaking taps. Choose percussion taps if replacing older taps in school.
- , they use less water and switch off automatically.
- Take a shower rather than a bath. A typical shower uses only one fifth of the energy of a full bath.
- Only run appliances that use water (like washing machines and dishwashers) when they are full. A washing machine on full cycle can use up to 65 litres of water and dishwashers can use 20 litres. Choose 'A' rated appliances to reduce energy and water use.
- Make better use of the timers on your immersion or boiler so you can control when the heating comes on and goes off. This means you have heating and hot water when and where you want it without wasting energy.
- Only fill the kettle with just enough water for your needs. You will save energy too.
- Schools pay for water so read your water meter, monitor your use and run an awareness campaign to reduce water use and save energy. For lots more tips read the water conservation factsheet at http://www.energyineducation.ie/Energy_In_Education/Information_For_Schools/Resources_and_links/Water_Conervation_Factsheet.pdf
- Use a water butt to collect rainwater from your gutters for use in the garden (make sure to securely cover large containers for safety). These are available from some Local Authorities and garden centres. Water plants in the early morning or evening when it's cooler. Forget the hose and always use a watering can fitted with a rose.
- Use a basin in your sink to collect and reuse water for your garden plants.

Useful websites

- Check out the Tap Tips website for top tips on saving water www.taptips.ie
- See tips on saving water from the Environmental Protection Agency <http://www.epa.ie/livegreen/water/>
- Read about The Water for Life Institute and their projects in developing countries <http://www.waterforlife.org/>

Videos

- School video on how saving water saves energy <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vd3DmihlEXA>
- Tips on how saving water saves energy <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XJDcEAYh2AM>

Teacher Lesson Plan

Use the [Energy in Action](#) resources and do the following lesson plan with your class
A3 Activity 2: Visualising: Why Sustainability? How much fresh water is there?

